

Peace Mocked

To the Editor:

A Nobel Peace Prize for Mikhail S. Gorbachev? It is a mockery of the idea of peace. Under Mr. Gorbachev, Soviet forces escalated the war in

Afghanistan and stepped up intelligence operations worldwide. Under Mr. Gorbachev, dozens of Kazakhs were killed in the bloody suppression of their national unrest in late 1986, and many were shot and beaten in Georgia for opposing the regime in spring 1989. It was Mr. Gorbachev who ordered the economic blockade of Lithuania.

To bolster his regime's diminishing control, Mr. Gorbachev sent to Baku troops who shot dead approximately 200 men, women and children, and wounded hundreds more. Under Mr. Gorbachev, Etibar Mamedov, co-leader of the Azerbaijan Popular Front, political moderate and historian, languishes in a K.G.B. prison. Between his arrest last January — for calling a press conference with Western journalists — and a report of last August, he has been permitted one visitor once.

Repression, like appeasement, is indeed a kind of peacemaking. Is this the new meaning of the Nobel Peace Prize?

AUDREY L. ALTSTADT
Asst. Professor of History
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Mass., Oct. 15, 1990